



United States Attorney's Office
District of Columbia

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PRESS RELEASE

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Former D.C. Public Schools employee pleads guilty to interstate transportation of stolen goods

-- Over 22-month period, school employee steals over \$30,000 of computer equipment--

WASHINGTON - A 27-year-old Hyattsville, Maryland man, Hakeem Blaize, has pled guilty to interstate transportation of stolen goods in connection with his theft of over \$30,000 worth of computers and computer equipment from the District of Columbia Public Schools, U.S. Attorney Jeffrey A. Taylor and Joseph Persichini, Jr., Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Washington Field Office, announced today.

Blaize entered his guilty plea earlier today in U.S. District Court before the Honorable Colleen Kollar-Kotelly. Blaize, who is scheduled to be sentenced on August 4, 2009, faces a statutory penalty of up to 10 years in jail, three years of supervised release, and a fine. Blaize has agreed to pay the District of Columbia Public School \$34,955.44 in restitution. Under the federal sentencing guidelines, Blaize faces a likely sentencing range of 6 to 12 months.

During today's plea hearing, Blaize, who was employed by the District of Columbia Schools, admitted that between December 2006 and October 2008, he stole over \$30,000 of computer equipment from the District of Columbia Public Schools, and transported the stolen goods to Maryland and Virginia where he sold them. In Maryland, Blaize pawned the equipment at two different pawnshops. In Virginia, Blaize sold the computer equipment to a man who later became a cooperating witness for the FBI. Between July and September 2008, Blaize sold six stolen laptop computers to the cooperating witness and the transactions were recorded by the FBI.

In announcing the guilty plea, U.S. Attorney Taylor and FBI Assistant Director in Charge Persichini praised the efforts of the FBI Special Agents, who, along with D.C. Public School Investigator Kenneth Algood, conducted the investigation in this case. They also commended Legal Assistant Lisa Robinson of the U.S. Attorney's Office who assisted in the prosecution, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Thomas J. Hibarger, who is prosecuting the case.

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